

Group I, claims 1-30 (the Examiner included claim 31 in the Group I claims, but it is apparent that this was an error and that claim 31 is part of the Group II claims); and

Group II, claims 31-116.

Applicants elect, with traverse, Group I claims 1-30.

It is respectfully submitted that, contrary to the Examiner's argument, the claims of all of the identified groups are directed to substantially the same invention. Although recited with different specificities and, thus, defining claims of different scope, all of the groups of claims recite "area discrimination means," "coefficient calculation means" and "correction means," as recited in the Group I claims. The claims of Group II recite additional limitations to those quoted above; but still, these features of the Group I claims are present in the Group II claims. While the Examiner is correct in noting that, as a result, the scope of the Group I claims is broader in some respects than the scope of the Group II claims, the fact that claims are of different scope is not and should not be the basis for requiring restriction.

It is common U.S. patent practice to present claims ranging from narrow to broad scope and directed to different features and aspects. It would, of course, serve no purpose if all of the claims in a patent application were of the same scope or if all of the claims were directed to the very same feature. It is urged, therefore, that since the claims present in the instant application are of different scope and are directed to different features, all encompassed by the same invention, as is typical in U.S. practice, the present restriction requirement should be withdrawn.

Furthermore, it is submitted that a search for the invention defined by the Group I claims will require a search that encompasses the claims of Group II and, thus, all of the groups

of claims of the instant application will be searched. Therefore, if the present requirement for restriction is maintained, the logical result will be the filing of a divisional application to include the claims encompassed by the non-elected group. Of course, this will mean that the examination of such claims will be delayed. However, since the search for the claims included in the divisional application will overlap with and, in all probability, be identical to the search that is to be conducted on the Group I claims elected herein, the primary effort needed to examine all applications will be repeated. Furthermore, it is likely that the same Examiner will be in charge of the divisional case; but in light of the delay between the prosecution of the present application and that of the divisional application, the Examiner will have to conduct a duplicate, redundant search at a later time. Alternatively, if a different Examiner is assigned to the divisional application, a significant loss of PTO efficiency will result in his examination of that divisional case. After all, the present Examiner will be the individual in the best position to examine all applications and he will be fully familiar with the subject matter of that divisional application.

Therefore, since the only logical outcome of the present restriction requirement would be to delay the examination of the claims included in Group II, resulting in inefficiencies on the part of the Office and unnecessary expenditures by Applicants, and since the single search can be done for all claims without any significant burden on the Office, the withdrawal of the